15. Co-operation, Geology and Mining.—I have only a word or two to say regarding co-operation, geology and mining. For the past twelve months, these departments have not much to show by way of results, although it must be owned that the working of the Co-operative Department evinced some signs of improvement and that the State Geologist has at last brought out his consolidated report on the geology of Travancore. Mr. Chakko was not able to work the new programme, chalked out for him by the Government, of an economic survey of the geological wealth of the State, owing mainly to the want of an Assistant to help him, whose appointment, though sanctioned earlier, could be actually given effect to only in Tulam 1097. With a view to secure up-to-date knowledge and organising skill in the head of the Co-operative Department, Mr. R. Vaidyalingam Pillai was deputed to Madras for a period of six months to undergo a course of training in Co-operation. He has just returned and has been asked to formulate his proposals for the improvement of the department. One of the Co-operative Inspectors has also been just trained in Madras in co-operative work, and it is proposed to utilise his services for the training of the other Co-operative Inspectors under the supervision of Mr. Vaidyalingam Pillai.

16. Excise.—The efficiency of the Excise Department has continued undiminished during the period under review, and, as you will observe from the Administration Report for 1096, there has been a remarkable expansion of revenue, especially under the head of customs. The outstanding features of the year's work are the special improvements effected to the salt factories in South Travancore which are responsible for an increase of 40 acres in the area under salt culture and the re-adjustment with the Madras Government of the arrangement under which the duty on ganja consumed in the State is shared by that Government and the Darbar. The result of the re-adjustment is distinctly more favourable to the Darbar inasmuch as, under the old arrangement, the share of the Madras Government was one fourth of an ever-increasing rate of duty, while under the revised arrangement the Darbar gets the full benefit of all future increases of duty and has to pay to the Madras Government a fixed rate of Rs. 3 only per seer of the duty which now stands at Rs. 20 and which is sure to increase as years advance.

17. Forest.—The revenue of the Department has shown a marked fall; but it should be remembered that this fall was due mostly to the tightness of the money market and the slump created in the timber market by large imports of Burma teak, for neither of which the department could be held responsible. A great deal remains to be done in the way of opening up our valuable forests, and the Government must look to the Conservator for a carefully thought out scheme for the steady expansion of forest road mileage, so as to bring them within the reach of large timber markets. Another direction in which the department has yet to achieve results is the collection of useful information regarding the resources of our forests and the methods of their profitable exploitation and utilization. A beginning, however, has now been made in this direction, and Mr. R. Dhanukoti Pillai, Deputy Conservator, has been deputed to carry out in the first instance an economic survey of the forest wealth of the Neriamangalam valley and an investigation of the possibilities of the paper pulp industry in the Northern Division. With a view to enable him to devote his whole time to higher work, he has been relieved of his routine duties, and his reports are awaited. Government also feel that there is scope for the expansion of sandalwood plantations in the Anjanad valley and that adequate attention has not been devoted to this work in the past. The Conservator has been asked to formulate definite proposals in this matter. The want of training on the part of most of the forest subordinates being a serious handicap to the efficient administaration of the department, and the fees charged for such training in colleges outside the State being prohibitive, Government have opened a Forest College at Quilon with effect from Tulam 1097 for the benefit of these subordinates as well as of those that intend seeking service in the department. The syllabus and the course of studies in this institution are the same as those in the Forest College at Coimbatore and pupils are trained for the Travancore Diploma in Forestry, the Travancore Rangers' Certificate and the Travancore Foresters' Certificate.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly